

Research Brief

Background Research Papers for Preparing the National Social Security Strategy of Bangladesh

Social Protection Strategies to Address Social and Gender Based Exclusion, Including Disability, High Risk Groups and Minority Groups in Bangladesh

Introduction

Bangladesh has made good progress in achieving growth but even with higher growth, better jobs and better access to essential services, a part of the under-privileged population will likely be left out. These under-privileged people include a number of socially excluded and marginalized people who, for various reasons, fail to enjoy the benefit of economic growth. They are excluded socially since these individuals or groups are unable to participate fully in their society

Objective: To understand the challenges of socially excluded individuals or groups. Review of existing programmes to establish better targeting with a view to ensuring that all under-privileged groups are given priority in the distribution of benefits. Particular attention should be given to strengthening the underlying institutions.

Methodology: Poverty and econometric analysis is done using Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) 2010 data. HIES 2010 data is complemented by various studies and reports.

Research Findings

Poverty and Profile of Social Exclusion in Bangladesh

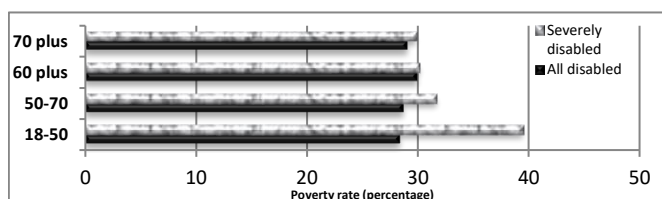
Social exclusion and poverty are widely considered to be closely related and overlapping.

- The socially excluded population includes the indigenous people, dalits (lower caste), and people with HIV AIDS, disable people.
- Common indicators of exclusion are unequal access to employment, formal services such as health, education and water and sanitation, and landlessness.

Indigenous: Poverty is highest in areas in which indigenous peoples are concentrated (mainly in the Chittagong Hill Tracts). Indigenous people are poor, rural-based, and education is not their first priority. Job insecurity is also made worse as they are often paid less than Bengali labourers for the same work.

Dalits or lower caste people are being identified as untouchables, have no social, economic and employment rights and opportunities to mix-up with the mainstream. They are the victims of antagonism and oppression due to their low socio-economic status. policy makers must give needful attention in addressing discriminations and exploitations faced by Dalit communities.

People with Disabilities:



Compared with the national poverty rate, at 31.5 percent, the poverty rate of households with a severely disabled member is higher – at 34.7 percent – suggesting that disability can place a great burden on households.

Sexual Minority Groups

HIV Affected People: There are estimated twelve thousand HIV positive people in Bangladesh. Many of them are very poor and economically marginalized. There is no policy bar in providing legal services to the people living with HIV. In addition, infected/affected women and children are deprived from property after the death of their husband/father.

Female Sex Workers (FSW): The total number of FSWs between the ages of 10-24 years old nationwide is estimated to be around 31,101. These sex workers are found all over the country – particularly in the major cities and in different settings.

MSM, MSW and Transgender (TG): Men who have Sex with Men; MSW – Male Sex Worker and Transgender are other sexually minor groups found in Bangladesh. It was estimated that a total of 6096 TGs are there in Bangladesh with Dhaka having the highest (1560) and Barisal having the lowest estimate (59) of TGs.

Types of exclusion faced

During HIV testing/diagnosis, many of the PLHIV reports being discriminated against by doctors, nurses, and laboratory technicians who freely disclose their status to others and a mistreated for this disclosure. Generally, there is limited data on children of sex workers in Bangladesh due to their hidden nature.

Transgender and sex workers are not considered for having health insurance. Considering their high risk and health related vulnerability private organizations deny them from having the service. Problems also prevail in case of attaining security and legal services from law enforcement authority as well.

Other groups include Elderly people, Environmentally Challenged Group (Geographically displaced people by disasters and flood), Widowed and distressed Women and Children.

Factors Determining Participation in SSNPs in Bangladesh: An Econometric Analysis

An econometric analysis done to understand how different social and gender-based characteristics influence households' participation in different SSNPs.

In order to determine which factors, play significant role in determining whether a household is included in SSNP or not and to observe if there is any sort of bias, the researcher has run a regression.

The results are as follows

- When a household belongs to the extreme poor group then its probability of getting included in the SSNPs is 8 percent higher compared to the other income groups.
- The marginal effect of per capita consumption suggests that a 1000-taka increase in consumption expenditure reduces the probability of being included in any programme by 4 percent.
- Both the dummy for Disabled and Head of the household disabled reflects higher probability compared to their counterparts by 6.8 percent and 4.1 percent respectively.
- A higher female dependency ratio increases probability of SSNP participation by 3.9 percent.

Social Protection Programmes for Excluded Population in Bangladesh

Along with many other programmes there are few programmes targeted towards the ethnic minority of the country. The purpose of these programmes is to address the minority of the country and to provide them assistance if they are in poverty.

The National Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS (2004-2010) identifies programme objectives as providing support and services to the priority groups of people, reducing vulnerability arising from lack of understanding of HIV epidemic, promoting safe practices in the health care system, providing care and support and services to the people living with HIV/AIDS and minimizing the impact of the HIV/AIDS.

The major programmes are:

Elderly	Person with Disabilities	Ethnic Minority	Environmentally Challenged	Widow, Destitute Women
Old Age Allowance	Allowance for the Financially Insolvent Disabled	Non Bengali Rehabilitation	Disaster Risk Mitigation and Reduction	Allowance for Widow, Deserted and Destitute
Honorarium for Insolvent Freedom Fighters	Stipend for Disabled Students	Food Assitance in CTG Hill area	Vulnerable Group Feeding	Maternal Health Voucher Scheme
Honorarium for Injured Freedom Fighters	Grants for Schools for the Disabled	Allowance for Beneficiaries in the CTG Hill Tract Areas	Gratuitous Relief	Maternal Allowance Programme for Poor Lactating Mothers
Pension for Retired Govt. Employees	Fund for the Welfare of the Acid Burnt Disabled		Fund for Climate Change	

Conclusion

Coverage of existing programmes which have proven track records can be expanded. The old age pension scheme may also be expanded in phases. The dalits, HIV affected people can be included in the existing programmes. There is no health insurance facility in Bangladesh. Therefore, people living with HIV should be included in the national security protection scheme.

To address these challenges, there is a need to significantly strengthen the social protection programmes in Bangladesh. The strategy will be to design and implement a range of social protection programmes that meets the needs of this socially excluded population. In this regard, existing programmes should be reviewed and reformed to establish better targeting with a view to ensuring that all under-privileged groups including the disabled, the elderly, the tribal population, and children and women at risk are given priority in the distribution of benefits. Particular attention should be given to strengthening the underlying institutions

